

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Tuesday, December 4, 2007
University of Connecticut Lodewick Visitors Center, 115 North Eagleville
Road**

4:00 PM

Minutes

Present: Chair: Philip Lodewick, Steve Bacon, Tom Callahan, Janet Jones, Frank McNabb, Betsy Paterson, Steve Rogers, Kristin Schwab, Phil Spak, Betsy Treiber, David Woods

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm, Kathleen Paterson, Lee Cole-Chu

1. Call to Order

Philip Lodewick called the meeting to order at 4:07 pm.

2. Opportunity for Public to Comment

There were no comments from the public.

3. Approval of Minutes

Betsy Paterson made a motion to approve the minutes. Janet Jones seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

4. Director's Report

Cynthia van Zelm said that Kathleen Paterson had worked with property owners on getting the holiday lights up on the commercial buildings in Storrs Center along Storrs Road as well as on the HealthSouth building and the Town Hall. The Community Center will be putting up lights as well.

Ms. van Zelm noted that there are several businesses that are now taking Husky Bucks which debits a UConn student, faculty or staff card when they make purchases. Ms. K. Paterson noted that the availability of using Husky Bucks off campus will be a great advantage to the new downtown.

Ms. van Zelm said she had followed up with Macon Toledano and Monica Quigley at LeylandAlliance re: signage for the area where the Dog Lane-1 building will be constructed. They were receptive. Ms. van Zelm said she

will be having a conference call with Mr. Toledano and Ms. Quigley and others to discuss the signage and other public relations projects and ideas. Steve Bacon thought it would be wise to run the proposed sign by Curt Hirsch, the Mansfield zoning agent, as a courtesy even though the sign would be on UConn property. Mr. Lodewick suggested including the rendering of the Dog Lane-1 building and note that this area would be the future home of Storrs Center.

5. Update on Storrs Center Project and Next Steps

Ms. van Zelm said that with respect to the Dog Lane-1 building, Mr. Toledano has provided Matt Hart and Mansfield Finance Director Jeff Smith with information to assist with the proposed financing of the building and Mr. Smith is reviewing this information. If the redevelopment agency route is recommended by staff, the proposal is expected to go before the Town Council in January.

Ms. van Zelm said the CT Bond Commission meeting scheduled for Friday has been rescheduled for December 12. It is still unclear whether the parking garage funding would be put on the agenda.

Ms. van Zelm said the Town has hired a parking consultant to do peer review of the work done by Leyland's consultant Desman Associates. Ms. van Zelm met with him along with Town staff. One of the issues discussed was how to deal with the free parking available at night at the high school, the Town Hall, and adjacent commercial lots which may affect whether people park in the garage.

Mr. Lodewick noted that he and other Board members were getting questions about the status of the Storrs Center project. With the zoning approvals, there is the expectation that the project will start to move more quickly.

Steve Rogers noted that some business owners are holding off retrofits in anticipation of moving. There is a need to keep the business owners and affected property owners apprised of the schedule.

Mr. Lodewick and Frank McNabb noted that an updated timeline for the project needs to be reviewed.

Ms. van Zelm said the applications to the CT Department of Environmental Protection and the US Army Corps of Engineers had been submitted in early November. The expectation is that it would take 3 to 6 months to hear back on these applications. The application to the State Traffic Commission is being prepared with the plan to submit it in January.

Ms. van Zelm said a meeting has been scheduled to go over potential revisions to the development agreement between the Partnership and Leyland on December 13.

Ms. van Zelm said that she could have Macon Toledano and Howard Kaufman from Leyland update the Board in January if possible. Mr. Lodewick agreed that this would be a good idea and also reiterated that an updated timeline is important so that people know what to expect. Ms. van Zelm said that Leyland continues to be very positive about the project and are anxious to keep it moving at a good pace as well.

Ms. van Zelm noted the milestones that are critical which have been been discussed – zoning, funding for the parking garage, and relocation. The zoning is complete and a lot of work is going on regarding funding for the garage, and getting the Dog Lane-1 building up. In response to a question, Tom Callahan said that Leyland has said it will move ahead on Dog Lane-1 without having everything in place to start Phase One.

Tom Callahan said it is important to continue to work on financing for the Dog Lane-1 building that keeps rents as low as possible. This makes the process take a little longer.

He said that the Dog Lane-1 building is scheduled to be started in the spring. He said the timeline would be to get Dog Lane-1 financing finalized, negotiate relocations with the businesses, demolish buildings, and then begin Phase One.

With respect to the development agreement, Mr. Callahan said that many of the obligations in the agreement were related to the Municipal Development Plan and zoning. Those obligations have been met. The key now is to look at revising the agreement to address relocation, phasing of the project including construction timeline, etc. He will be providing the development agreement for Blue Back Square in West Hartford to the Finance and Administration Committee as background. His goal is to have revisions to the agreement in the next 90 days – prior to Dog Lane-1 construction.

6. Report from Committees

Advertising and Promotion

Dean Woods asked Ms. K. Paterson to update the Board on the status of the banners for the pedestrian walkway and Winter Fun Day.

Ms. K. Paterson said that five banners with snowflakes and a blue background have been ordered. The Town, UConn, Partnership,

Community Center, and LeylandAlliance will be represented with an additional slice. All five entities will be contributing to the cost of the banners. The goal is to highlight the walkway and re-enforce the Storrs Center project. This will be a pilot project for the larger banner program. The banners should be up in about two weeks.

Ms. K. Paterson said the 2nd annual Winter Fun Day is scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 10 with sponsorship by the Partnership, Community Center, and the Town Manager's office. There will be ice skating (weather permitting), ice sculptures, choral groups, horse drawn carriage rides and a Wacky Hat contest.

Dean Woods said the Committee also discussed the potential brick program in the new development which would recognize sponsors of the Partnership and Storrs Center, and possibly serve as a revenue source for the Partnership. He said the Committee was leaning toward a different tact which would involve creating a piece of public art which would serve a similar purpose. Dean Woods said a tree with leaves representing donors was done in a library in the Midwest.

Ms. Schwab asked Dean Woods if summer theater was coming back this year. Dean Woods said the goal is to have summer theater starting in June. He noted that he had spoken to LeylandAlliance President Steve Maun about support.

Finance and Administration

Mr. Callahan said the Committee focused on revisions of the Partnership/LeylandAlliance development agreement to clarify expectations and commitments. One of the key items to discuss is whether the Town would have its own set of agreements with Leyland or whether it would be part of the Partnership/Leyland agreement. Mr. Callahan said he hopes to have a term sheet, which would identify the goals of the project, prepared in about 60 days.

Planning and Design

Mr. Bacon said that the Planning and Design Committee had met about the sustainability guidelines. Committee members offered verbal and written comments to Mr. Toledano at the meeting. The Committee felt comfortable with the comments.

Mr. Bacon said that Mr. Toledano will review the document again with his Leyland colleagues and with Steven Winter who had assisted with drafting the guidelines.

Mr. Bacon said the goal had been to have a recommendation to the Board for January or February but that there will need to be some more time to have all the comments incorporated into the document. It now looks like the Committee will meet on the guidelines one more time in February. He said March is now more realistic to bring them to the Board.

Mr. Bacon said that the idea of a roundabout at the intersection of Storrs Road and South Eagleville Road had been resurrected by Lon Hultgren, Town Public Works Director.

Mr. Bacon said the Committee had met with CDOT regional representatives almost five years ago and they were not entirely receptive to a roundabout, but CDOT appears now to be more interested in this concept to help with traffic control.

Mr. Bacon said his personal feelings were that coming from a southerly direction, the Storrs Road/S. Eagleville Road location would be an ideal spot to denote the beginning of the downtown. The roundabout would be a good calming measure by forcing people to slow down. Now, the intersection does not function well. He thinks the roundabout would have great appeal.

Mr. McNabb said it would be worthwhile to look at other places where roundabouts have worked. He expressed initial support for the idea.

Ms. Schwab mentioned that CDOT had started a context sensitive design section which looks at projects in the context of the bigger picture of community design. There appears to be a softening in the approach that the priority is to get cars through quickly.

Several Committee members expressed initial support for a roundabout.

Mr. Bacon said the next step is that the Town is studying whether a roundabout is feasible, and, if so, will ascertain the Town of Mansfield's support for the roundabout. If the local community supports it, it will get more of an audience from CDOT.

7. Adjourn

Betsy Treiber made a motion to adjourn. Janet Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm.

Meeting notes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.